

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

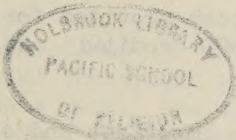
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Responsible Parenthood and the Asian Churches.	1
The Role of Christian Kindergartens and Nursery Schools.	1
Conference of Christian Kindergartens in Asia.	2
A Visit to Korea (Rev. Tsunetaro Miyakoda)	3
Soka Gakkai (Continue from No. 250).	4
Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, First Convention.	5
Tokyo Olympics and Christian Churches.	5

RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD AND THE ASIAN CHURCHES

The Christian Home and Family Department of the National Christian Council of Japan met on April 21 with participants from the committees of Social Affairs, International Affairs, Faith and Order, Women, Japan Medical Association and the Christian Social Worker's Association. This was the first follow-up program of joint action for mission emerging from the Consultation of Responsible Parenthood held in Bangkok from February 21 to 25 of this year. This was part of the program of the East Asian Christian Conference.

At the meeting Dr. Minoru Tachi, Director of the Department of Population Problems in the Ministry of Welfare, made a report on the above consultation, commenting, "It was a surprising thing and an outstanding action taken by Christians that responsible parenthood and family welfare are focal points among Christians. Only 3% of the entire population is Christian in Asia. Approaching this problems with Christian motivation is highly significant. This is a realm where only religionists take part. There is urgent need for religion and science to create a deepening mutual relationship and understanding. There is also need for dialogue between religious groups on the topic.

The East Asia Christian Conference Consultation was a meaningful and fruitful one, especially for those who came from non-Christian backgrounds."

The second follow-up of the East Asia Christian Conference Consultation will be the publishing of a pamphlet, a translation of its statement, entitled, The Churches in Asia and Responsible Parenthood.

THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN KINDERGARTENS AND NURSERY SCHOOLS

In recent years the directions of education for children has been pushed strongly by the Minister of Education and the Ministry of Welfare. As a result, the role of Christian Kindergartens and Nursery Schools has come under critical

appraisal.. A number of people have contributed to such a study. Miss Gertrud Kueklich was asked by the Interboard Committee and the United Church of Christ in Japan, the Kyodan, to consider the problems. She made a report on April 10, 1964. The report stated that help from the Inter-church Board toward institutions was much appreciated. Never-the-less, the situation on the whole is not satisfactory, there are a number of kindergartens and nursery schools which do not come up to the standard of accreditation of the Ministry of Education and Welfare. It is extremely difficult to get hold of good Christian teachers. In spite of the fact that public institutions and general private institutions have been rapidly improving their facilities, church-related institutions are having a very difficult time to improve their buildings.

Up to now ¥13,200,000 (\$36,666,67) have been provided for the kindergartens and 56 nursery schools. Yet there are still 500 credited and non-credited institutions that need help.

Kindergartens and nursery schools are the important and effective arms of the Church to reach the local community, the media of penetration in the neighborhood.

Unless this difficult situation is remedied now, the administration and continuation of these institutions will be extremely arduous.

There are a number of people who have been working in this field for many years, yet, due to the lack of an adequate fund, are having an extremely difficult time. The church was requested to do something about this matter. In Japan there are:

Public Institutions	2,526
Private Institutions	4,713
Christian Institutions	1,100
Church Related Institutions	450
Total	8,789

As a recommendation to the Interboard Committee, it stated that there should be an increase of scholarships for teachers, a deputation of fraternal workers who are specialists in children's education. a fund for the purchase of lots on which to build a rest house for retired teachers. As a request to the Kyodan, it stated that although the Kyodan is responsible for more than 600 Kindergartens and Nursery Schools, it has no definite policy which is relevant to the individual institutions.

In order to expand and rebuild the facilities, an adequate fund with this provision is necessary; double the allocated loan is needed.

According to the Welfare Ministry's ^{report} request 40% of the three-year-olds of the total population (520,000) do not reach the standard average for the age physically or mentally. The training of teachers who can work on these cases is most urgent and the establishment of a rotating leadership to visit the various institutions. Finally it recommended that a study be made of the ministers who are the directors of kindergartens.

CONFERENCE OF CHRISTIAN KINDERGARTENS IN ASIA

As a joint program of the Christian Kindergarten Association, a JNCC member, and the Christian Education Department of the NCC of Japan, the Asia Christian Kindergarten Conference will be held in Japan in May 1965. A preparatory committee has been formed.

In 1962 when the Third Institute for Christian Education was held in Belfast, Ireland, by the World Council of Christian Education and Sunday School Association, the Reverend Shinji Iwamura attended the meeting and expressed his concern by saying, "Christian kindergartens and nursery schools have no world-wide fellowship. Would it be possible to have a meeting of the directors of Asia kindergartens and nursery schools and to help other countries who are not yet benefited by the Christian education of young children?" His proposal was accepted and on his return home he consulted with the two above mentioned organizations and definite steps were taken.

A VISIT TO KOREA (Rev. Tsunetaro Miyakoda, General Secretary of Japan Bible Society)

For three years the general secretary of the Japan Bible Society has been receiving warm invitations to visit the Korean Bible Society. This was a special privilege in view of the bright prospect of the ratification of the treaty between Japan and Korea this year. The executive committee was glad to approve the trip giving Korea friends a fresh expression of good will.

After three months of effort, a visa was finally obtained, thirty minutes after closing time, the day before he was to leave. He left March 20, arriving at Kimpo Airport at 1 p.m.

This is Mr. Miyakoda's story:

The plane flew over Tottori and Shimane Prefectures where the Japan Bible Society colporteurs are at work. We then crossed the Japan Sea, landing safely at Seoul. Members of the Bible Society staff, headed by the Reverend Young Bin Im, General Secretary, various church leaders and a group of former students of Aoyama Gakuin University in Tokyo, met me.

The road from the airport was in splendid condition and afforded fine views of the scenic Han River. As we came near the city, we saw many church buildings with high towers, a witness to the strength of the Christian movement in Korea. We went through the old Ryuzan district (or old military reservation) and the great South Gate, which was in excellent repair, to the Hotel Metro, conveniently located at the center of the city. That evening I attended a dinner at the home of Mr. Im. Most of the guests were old friends met previously in Japan. The work of the Bible Society was presented through its activities and in connection with the social situation, a good briefing for the visit.

Saturday was devoted to a meeting with the staff members concerning the various problems of Bible publication and distribution especially in view of the shortage of paper, poor printing facilities and difficult economic conditions. The work of translation has been carried on amid very delicate and divided church relationships. There was much to learn regarding the work of public relations and securing contributions for the Korea Bible Society. A later meeting with the staff gave opportunity for the exchange of ideas and for closer cooperation between the two Bible societies. That evening there was an Aoyama Gakuin alumni welcome meeting and a chance to see again 20 former students.

Palm Sunday we attended the Young Mak Presbyterian Church, founded by North Korean refugees. The second, 10 a.m. service was filled with 2,500 people; it was difficult to find seats even at the back. According to the bulletin the previous Sunday attendances at threemorning services amounted to 7,600 people.

In the afternoon a so-called Christian town of 10,000 people, built by Christian refugees between Seoul and Inchon was visited. As it was Sunday all the shops were closed; People were going up and down the hill where the church is located. This church is said to have a seating capacity of 10,000. About 3,000 people were waiting for the coming of Mr. Park Tai Zen who headed the group that started the town. Another such town is about five miles north of Seoul, begun by the same group of refugees.

Monday was devoted to National Christian Council projects, visiting several departments at the Christian Literature Building. At the Visual Aid Department, I was asked to make a tape on the work of the Japan Bible Society in Japan. This was followed by a reception at the YMCA hall in front of Bible House where I spoke to about 50 people on the situation of Japanese churches.

Tuesday a visit to Panmunjon was scheduled, the armistice headquarters at the border between North and South Korea, about 60 miles from Seoul. We were warmly welcomed by American military men and shown the place where North and South Koreans hold regular meetings and something of the silent and gloomy demilitarized zone. That evening, back in Seoul, a group of missionaries from various countries met through the kindness of Mr. Kenyon of the Korean Bible Society and Mr. Nelson of World Vision. This turned out to be a very useful time of sharing.

On Wednesday Seoul was crowded with the Anti-Japanese Korean Treaty demonstration rally of students from universities and high schools. Amid the noise of loud speakers a final talk on the work of the Bible societies was held, and at one p.m. a jeep drove me through the crowds of demonstrators. We had a glimpse of the new children's hospital built by World Vision and then I was given a great send-off at the airport. By five p.m. I was back in Tokyo. This was my first visit to Korea representing the Japan Bible Society and it opened my eyes to the need of closer cooperation between the two negotiating societies.

SOKA GAKKAI (by Rev. Noah S. Brannen)

This is a continuation of an article which appeared in the last issue of JCA

The following are "several questions" which are put to the Christians:

Finally, how does Christianity consider the following contradictions:

- 1) The contradiction involved in saying that only believers will be saved, yet that there is obligation to save those who have gone astray,
 - 2) The fact that it was the same Christian Church which preached 'love thine enemies,' that persecuted Galileo and other scientists.
 - 3) The dropping of the atomic bomb directly on the Japanese Christian town of Nagasaki
 - 4) While the Great Holy One (Nichiren) was victorious when the suffering of Tatsunokuchi threatened his life, Christ suffered a miserable, violent death,
 - 5) Not one of Christ's prophecies was fulfilled,
 - 6) Isn't the fact that internal disunity, which is apparent through the proposed ecumenical movement, proof that its doctrine is impotent?
 - 7) While speaking of the poor in spirit and the pure in heart, the Vatican has had a history of colossal power and political pressure,
 - 8) Which of all the Christian sects is the true tradition and doctrine?
- Since the various sects contain false doctrine and teach principles that cast men deeper into sin, turning their backs on Christ.

The author in turn has some questions which he would like to ask Soka Gakkai believers.

- 1) How does Soka Gakkai explain the contradiction that though true religion should be universal, as they claim, Soka Gakkai is a nationalistic religion, with a Japanese historical person, Nichiren, as the object of worship, and a Japanese formula "Namu Myohorengekyo" as the magic word for salvation?
- 2) If Soka Gakkai has the "truth" as they claim, why is it that they have to "brow-beat" people to accept this truth?
- 3) If Soka Gakkai is a "truly scientific" religion, as they claim, how do they explain scientifically the superstitious beliefs of the common Soka Gakkai member for example, how can they believe that a corpse becomes as light as cotton if

that person had been a true believer; that faith in Nichiren, the worship object will give financial success; that cancer, infantile paralysis, and scars from the Atomic Bomb can be cured simply by saying the Namu Myohorengekyo; or that the water of the well at Taiseikiji is magic; or the onikuge (the tooth of Nichiren with flesh adhering to it that is said to be growing completely around the circumference)? Are these beliefs "scientific"?

4) If Christ's miserable death of the founder of Soka Gakkai, Makiguchi, who died of malnutrition in prison during the war?

Soka Gakkai members do not know much about Christianity. The Challenge of Soka Gakkai to Christians is that we should not make the same mistakes with them that they have made with us. We should know them, their teaching, and the reasons why people go to them instead of to the Christian Church. We must know their techniques, their power machine, their enlistment, propaganda and financial campaigns. (they raised the funds for their vast reinforced concrete worship hall in three days and has money left over for foreign missions). Soka Gakkai should challenge Christianity to break its professionalistic bonds and allow the power of faith to work in the man on the street.

JAPAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, FIRST CONVENTION

The first convention of the newly formed Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church was held in Kumamoto (Kyushu) on May 6. and 7. A Union between the Tokai Lutheran Church and the former Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church had been consummated one year earlier. The new church has undertaken a structure different from that in either of the former groups. Districts have been established and given considerable authority. These districts are related to the church at large through an Executive Committee and in the bi-annual convention.

At the first convention Dr. Chitose Kishi was elected to a two-year-term as President on the first ballot. The Reverend Kameshaburo Kawashima (previous President of the former Tokai Lutheran Church) was elected Vice-president, the Reverend Shogoro Ushimaru was elected Secretary and Mr. Masaaki Maruyama was elected Treasurer.

TOKYO OLYMPICS AND CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

For the first time in the history of Olympic competition an Asian city has been chosen as the site where the Olympics will be held. The Japanese nation has not taken the responsibility that accompanies this honor lightly. The largest city in the world is virtually being rebuilt in order to prepare an adequate welcome for guests from all over the world.

The Christian Church in Japan too, has been mindful that the Olympics present a special challenge. Plans are underway to provide adequate worship opportunities for the many guests and athletes who will come to Tokyo, from other areas in Japan, but also from the ends of the earth. The following list of churches has been drawn up as the official register for Christian worship during the Olympic Competition. Note that services in a number of foreign languages are being conducted.

The United Church of Christ in Japan

1) Aoyama Gakuin Church	Rev. Nobuo Kasama	Japanese
2) Ginza Church	Rev. Isamu Ukai	Japanese
3) Reinanzaka Church	Rev. Kiyoshi Ii	Japanese
4) Fujimicho Church	Rev. Kikaku Shimamura	Japanese
5) Kamakura-Yukinoshita Church	Rev. Mikio Matsuo	Japanese

Episcopal Church

1) Holy Trinity Church	Rev. Kiichi Akiyama	Japanese
2) St. Paul Church	Rev. Toshio Endo	Japanese
3) St. Alban's Church	Rev. Robert Smith	English

Japan Baptist Convention

1) Kanto Plains Baptist Church	Rev. H.D. Griffin	English
2) Mejirogaoka Church	Rev. Kiyoshi Yuya	Japanese
3) Zushi First Baptist Church	Rev. C.L. Whaley	English
4) Tokyo Baptist Church	Rev. M.F. Moorhead	English
5) Tokiwadai Baptist Church	Rev. Shichi Matsumura	Japanese
6) Yokohama International Baptist Church	Rev. M.F. Gillham	English

Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church

1) Ikebukuro Church	Rev. Shogoro Ushimaru	Finnish
2) Ichigaya Church	Rev. Lief Salomonsen	Norwegian
	Rev. F. Leth-Larsen	Danish
3) Tokyo Church	Rev. Denki Honda	English
4) Musashino Church	Rev. Masami Ishii	German

Japan Baptist Union

1) Myogadani Church	Rev. Noboru Hojo	Japanese
2) Fukagawa Church	Rev. Seiji Akiba	Japanese
3) Oshima Shinsei Church	Rev. Koitsu Nakayama	Japanese
4) Suginami Baptist Church	Rev. Masayuku Sawano	Japanese

The Korean Church in Japan

1) Tokyo Church	Rev. Yoon Tai Oh	Korean
2) Yokohama Church	Rev. Chai Jyung Whang	Korean

East German Mission

1) Kreuzkirche	Dr. A. Schmidt	German
	Pfr. H. Oeler	"
	Pfr. H.E. Hamer	"
	Pfr. W. Kostizen	"

Tokyo Union Church

Dr. John C. Gingerich	English
Mr. M. DeVore	"

International Christian University Church

Dr. Yasuo Furuya	English and
Rev. Toshitsugu Arai	Japanese

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Addition to "ECUMENICAL STUDY GROUP"

In the April 15th issue of the Japan Christian Activity News, there was an article about an Ecumenical Study Group in Tokyo. Rev. Arthur E. Gamblin of Kobe, Japan, who is a subscriber to this paper, kindly wrote a letter to us informing us that there were also active ecumenical study groups in Kobe and Kyoto. These meet monthly, in Kyoto on the third Thursday evening and in Kobe on the first Thursday evening.